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Resource Management on the Ocala National Forest

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**Preserving The Past
For Our Children's Future**

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Ocala National Forest

Forest
Service



Southern
Region

United States Department of Agriculture

The Ocala National Forest is a unique tapestry of interwoven ecosystems. From a central sandhill ridge, east and west to the lowlands of the St. Johns and Oklawaha rivers there exist five main ecosystems: sand pine scrub, longleaf pine sandhills, lakes/ponds/prairies, pine flatwoods and riverine hardwoods.

Just as these ecosystems provide homes for a wide variety of natural flora and fauna, they have also been home to a species of cultural animal of particular interest to the reader... *Homo sapiens*. That's right; you, me, us...our kindred have left an unwritten record of their cultural activities in the sands of the Ocala.

Cultural Resource Base

This record stretches nearly 10,000 years into the past, from the latest 20th century "Buck Rogers" electronic warfare systems on the Pinecastle Bombing Range to the earliest Paleo-Indian hunter-gathering camps on our crystal clear springs. Each succeeding culture has left a unique trail of material objects, known as artifacts, in its wake...broken pieces of pottery, arrowheads and flint flakes, hand-made iron nails, iron barrel hoops, bones of butchered food animals, ceramic turpentine collection cups, etc.

From these materials and their distribution, we can identify the hunting and gathering camps, village sites, transportation routes, food prefer-

ences and general environmental exploitation patterns of humans on the Ocala through time. This body of materials and information we refer to as the "cultural resource base" of the Ocala National Forest.

Non-renewable Resources

Unlike the Ocala's renewable natural resources, such as trees, plants, and animals, its cultural resources are **non-renewable**. Each succeeding culture leaves a finite amount of material clues that enable future generations to interpret past activities. The cultural resource base is like a fully stocked library that lacks the ability to replace books that are lost through time. With every year that passes, the number of "books" grows smaller, pieces of the puzzle are lost, and the human story of the Ocala grows dimmer.

Destructive Forces

The loss of these cultural clues through time occurs as a result of two main processes:

- 1) **Natural:** erosion, oxidation (fire, rust), bacterial degradation, weathering, etc.
- 2) **Human:** *intentional - vandalism and looting*
unintentional - secondary result of development activities.



CULTURAL TIMELINE

10,000 YEARS OF CULTURAL RESOURCES ON THE Ocala NATIONAL FOREST

AD 2000	<p>Heritage Management initiated</p> <p>WW II: Warfare training facilities. CCC: Civilian Conservation Corps projects.</p> <p>USDA Forest Service: Reforestation and land management instituted.</p>
AD 1900	<p>White and black settlement: citrus, tourism, turpentine, widescale logging of virgin longleaf pine and cypress. Civil War. Seminole elimination.</p>
AD 1800	<p>Seminole occupation.</p> <p>2nd SPANISH PERIOD: Influx of Creek Indians into North Florida.</p> <p>BRITISH PERIOD: Trading posts, 18th century naturalist William Bartram publishes account of local peoples, flora and fauna.</p>
AD 1700	
AD 1600	<p>1st SPANISH CONTACT: Missions, citrus groves, warfare, disease followed by the demise of local Native Americans.</p>
AD 1500	
AD 1000	
AD 500	<p>ST. JOHNS: Chalkyware ceramics, horticulture, and burial mounds appear.</p>
AD 1	
500 BC	
1,000 BC	<p>TRANSITIONAL: Sand-tempered pottery developed.</p>
2,000 BC	<p>ORANGE: 1st pottery — fiber-tempered — is developed.</p>
4,000 BC	<p>Late ARCHAIC: Hunter-gatherers, immense snailshell middens deposited along St. Johns River, Oklawaha River & spring runs.</p>
6,000 BC	<p>Early</p>
8,000 BC	<p>Late</p>
10,000 BC	<p>PALEO-INDIAN: Hunters of late Pleistocene megafauna (mammoths)</p>
12,000 BC	<p>Early</p>

Heritage Management

Heritage management entails the location and identification of these sites, their protection, and their interpretation. There is little we can do to halt the natural ravages of time, with the exception of watershed erosion control. However, human destruction—intentional and unintentional—can be controlled.

Heritage Management (HM) is a relatively new arm of the USDA Forest Service land management team. It is an outgrowth of federal environmental legislation passed in the 1970's and 1980's. HM is incorporated in every management decision involving any land-disturbing activity within the National Forest System. Prior to any such activity, an area is surveyed and sites that are to be protected are located, flagged, and then carefully avoided. This is done to prevent the unintentional destruction of cultural resources during project implementation.

During the last decade, archeological surveys covering approximately one-third of the Ocala's 400,000 acres have identified and recorded more than 500 archeological/historical sites. Many of these are small and may include only a single artifact. However, numerous large, cul-



turally complex and extremely significant sites have been recorded. These important sites include 8,000-year-old Indian snail shell middens (kitchen refuse piles) at Silver Glen Springs, Salt Springs and Alexander Springs as well as an historic Florida "Cracker" settlement on Pat's Island (setting of Marjorie Kinnan Rawling's 1939 Pulitzer Prize Novel *The Yearling*). These sites are easily accessible and open to the public.

Except for sites that occur in major recreation areas, the Forest Service does not publish the exact locations of its cultural resource sites. This measure is meant to prevent the intentional vandalism and looting of these resources.

It is illegal to "dig, remove, injure or destroy any historic or prehistoric objects, ruins or sites" on federal land. "Violators subject to arrest, a maximum fine of \$20,000, and or imprisonment."

The Antiquities Act of 1906 and the Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979

The use of metal detectors on archeological or historical sites or areas other than designated public recreation areas without a special use permit is strictly prohibited.



Why Protect This Stuff?

The mosaic of our past — our cultural resources — on federal land belongs to all of us, our children, and their children. Passing information down from generation to generation is what the concept of culture is all about. Culture is what separates humankind from all other inhabitants of the forest. Let's not shortchange our kids. In today's world, they need all the guidance from the past they can get. They deserve the thrill of discovering an old homestead or Indian burial mound, etc., undisturbed and intact as they explore the Ocala National Forest. Our cultural resources are our "hidden wonders". If you find an artifact touch it, photograph it, think about it — and then replace it. It's **our** history.

For further information on cultural resource management on the Ocala National Forest, contact the archeologist at the district ranger's office:

Archeologist
Seminole Ranger District
40929 State Road 19
Umatilla, FL 32784
Telephone (904) 669-3153

ON THE COVER: *This engraving of a Timucuan Indian chief is based on paintings by Jacques Le Moyne, an artist who accompanied a French expedition to Florida in 1564. Also depicted in this brochure are indians transporting food to a granary by canoe, and examples of baskets and baked earthenware pots used by the Timucuan.*

The objective of the Forest Service is to provide natural goods and services to help meet the needs of the Nation and international community by providing a sustained flow of outdoor recreation, forage, wood, water, fish, wildlife, and wilderness.

Persons of any race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, or with any disability are welcome to use and enjoy all facilities, programs and services of the USDA. Discrimination in any form is strictly against agency policy, and should be reported to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250.